

Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet News Release

Contact: Bill Caldwell, Division of Water, 502-564-3410

WATER SHORTAGE WATCHES, WARNINGS LIFTED FOR 19 COUNTIES

48 counties remain under watch or warning

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 13, 2007) – Water shortage watches and warnings issued by the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet for 67 counties in June and September have been lifted for 19 of those counties.

The counties released are Adair, Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Green, Hart, Larue, Marion, Metcalfe, Muhlenberg, Nelson, Ohio, Shelby, Simpson, Spencer, Taylor, Warren and Washington counties in central and western Kentucky.

Drought conditions that threatened many water supplies in these counties improved as a result of the substantial rainfall that moved across central Kentucky in recent weeks. Stream flows and reservoir levels in many areas are now within the normal range for this time of year.

A water shortage watch continues in effect for the following 45 counties in central, south-central and eastern Kentucky: Anderson, Bath, Bell, Bourbon, Boyle, Breathitt, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Estill, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jackson, Jessamine, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lee, Leslie, Lincoln, Madison, McCreary, Menifee, Mercer, Montgomery, Monroe, Nicholas, Owen, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Scott, Wayne, Whitley, Wolfe and Woodford.

A water shortage warning remains in effect for all or portions of Harlan, Letcher and Magoffin counties, where water supplies are dependent on small headwater streams, small lakes or water storage in abandoned underground mineworks. Those water supplies remain below normal winter level.

The weather system that brought 6 to 9 inches of beneficial rain to portions of central and western Kentucky in October was less significant in the eastern portions of the 67-county water shortage watch/warning area. Rainfall amounts of 1 to 2 inches in eastern Kentucky were sufficient to provide some short-term improvements to stream flows, but many small water supply reservoirs remain several feet below normal.

The most severe annual rainfall deficits (13 to 18 inches) persist in headwater areas of the Licking, Kentucky and Cumberland rivers. These areas remain under conditions of extreme to exceptional hydrologic drought.

Water shortage watches and warnings remain in effect for large portions of central and southeastern Kentucky due to a persistent deficit in rainfall and its impacts to the following types of water supplies:

- Surface water obtained from small headwater streams.
- Surface sources relying on storage in small lakes or abandoned mineworks.
- All sources in the watch/warning area relying on groundwater.

- Surface sources relying on rivers that are fed from rainfall and runoff from headwater areas in eastern Kentucky.

Long-term outlooks from the National Weather Service indicate a warmer than normal winter with normal chances for precipitation early and slightly better chances for above normal precipitation going into January 2008. Normal or even slightly below normal winter precipitation could help relieve the drought conditions in the water shortage watch/warning area.

The Division of Water will continue to monitor drought conditions on a weekly basis.

